

## whitespace within a string

**Source:** <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Python/comp.lang.python/2004-02/3403.html>

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Is there a function/module that can be used to throw out extra whitespace that appears within a string? The problem that I have is this: Before any configuration is done to my files, they have lines with tabs in between the words like this:

```
"disable = yes"
```

After configuring the files using the operating system's administration tools, the OS rewrites the files to contain spaces instead of tabs. So now, the file looks like this:

```
"disable = yes"
```

I would like my script to work in either situation. Right now, it only works with spaces, not tabs. Below is the script:

```
def enable_ssh():
    # works on 10.3 systems, not 10.2 systems
    import os
    os.chdir('/etc/xinetd.d')
    find = 'disable = yes'
    replace = 'disable = no'
    x = file('ssh')
    data = x.read()
    x.close()
    search = str.find(data, find)
    if search >= 0:
        data = data.replace(find, replace)
        outputFile = file('ssh', 'w')
        outputFile.write(data)
        outputFile.close()
        print
        print "SSH was disabled... service restarted!!!"
        print
    else:
        print
        print "SSH was enabled... no action taken."
        print
```

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enable\_ssh()